Allow Extra Time

A Donor Family Advocate will review your card or letter to ensure confidentiality and forward it to the appropriate transplant center(s). The transplant center, in turn, will forward it to the recipient(s).

Since your card or letter must be mailed to LifeSource and then forwarded, please allow extra time for it to reach the recipient. It may take several weeks after you’ve mailed it for the recipient to receive it.

Will I receive a response from the transplant recipient?

Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that you will receive a response.

Many transplant recipients have said that they are overwhelmed with emotion and have difficulty expressing their gratitude in words. Some may take several months or years before they feel comfortable writing to their donor family.

Questions?

If the right words seem hard to find, or you have any questions or concerns about writing, please contact a LifeSource Donor Family Advocate at familyservices@life-source.org or 1.888.536.6283.
Deciding to Write

The decision to write to your loved one’s recipient(s) is a very personal one.

Donor families sometimes choose to write to transplant recipients to share information about themselves and their loved one. For some families, sharing with the transplant recipient helps them in their grief journey.

We support written correspondence between transplant recipients and donor families. All correspondence is completely anonymous and identities are kept confidential to protect the personal privacy of both families.

Please know that there are some differences in writing to organ and tissue recipients, detailed in the following sections.

Writing to Tissue Recipients

If your loved one was a tissue donor, it may take up to five years before the tissue is ultimately transplanted. Because of this timeline, the recipient would need to initiate contact and your family may then respond accordingly. In other words, it is not possible for your family to send correspondence to a tissue recipient until they reach out to you. Please be assured, your loved one’s generosity will always be remembered by those whose lives are restored.

If you receive correspondence from a tissue recipient who has provided their address to our tissue partner, you may respond to their letter. Please follow the same guidelines detailed under the section “Writing to Organ Recipients.”

Writing to Organ Recipients

If your loved one was an organ donor, you do not need to wait until you hear from the recipient(s) before you write. You may make the initial contact and write whenever you feel ready. A letter from your family may encourage a recipient to write, knowing that your family is ready and willing to receive correspondence.

You may send a greeting card, letter or photos. The following suggestions are a guide to help you with your correspondence.

Share General Information

- Your loved one’s name (please include first name only)
- Your loved one’s hobbies or interests
- Favorite story or memory of your loved one
- Photos of your family and/or loved one
- Please consider that the recipient may have different spiritual beliefs than you

Closing Your Letter

- Please sign your first name only
- Please do not reveal your address, city, telephone number or e-mail address
- Please do not reveal the name or location of the hospital in which your loved one died

Mailing Your Letter

Place your card or letter in an unsealed, unstamped envelope. Include in the envelope on a separate piece of paper:

- Your full name
- Your loved one’s full name
- Your loved one’s date of death

Mail the correspondence to:
LifeSource
Donor Family Advocate
2225 West River Road North
Minneapolis, MN 55411